



Comprehensive System of Student Assessment (CSSA)



Parent Guide To Test Interpretation for the Alternate Assessment In Science Spring 2009

The Purpose of Testing

The purposes of statewide student assessment specifically are to: 1) help determine which children are meeting statewide performance standards; 2) produce statewide information to facilitate sound decision making by policy makers, parents, educators, and the public; and 3) provide a focus for instructional improvement [4 AAC 06.700]. The purpose of the Alternate Assessment (AA) is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities will have access to, participate in, and make progress in the general education curricula, as well as show what they know and can learn. [4 AAC 06.775].

What the Alternate Assessment in Science Measures

The Alternate Assessment measures what students know and can do at their grade level in science as compared to the Alaska Extended Grade Level Expectations (ExGLEs) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Students performance on the Alternate Assessment is measured against alternate achievement standards which differ in complexity from grade level achievement standards.

Components of the Alternate Assessment

The Alternate Assessment now tests science as required by state and federal law. Assessment of functional skills is not included in the alternate assessments as statewide assessments must measure the student's academic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The tasks included in these assessments are performance curriculum-based measures and are aligned to the Extended Grade Level Expectations (ExGLEs). The assessment permits the use of accommodations, assistive technologies, and adaptations of the material in order to provide the best access to the content for each student.

Science

The alternate assessment in science is comprised of three grade level assessments (grades 4, 8, and 10) designed to measure essential skills in science. The tasks are designed to measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities are learning to comprehend and apply scientific knowledge. The tasks increase in complexity with each grade and include: concepts of physical science, concepts of life science, concepts of earth science, the history and nature of science, and science and technology. Individual grade assessments are comprised of the following: grade 4 contains 4 tasks addressing 5 content standards; grade 8 contains 4 tasks addressing 4 content standards; and grade 10 contains 4 tasks addressing 4 content standards.

Reading the Individual Student Report

The Individual Student Report (ISR) provides a graphic and text display of student performance. An **unofficial student report** is generated when Qualified Assessors enter student test scores after completing the administration of the Alternate Assessment during the testing window of February - April 2008. It is immediately available and is designed to provide instructional feedback. A separate student report is generated for reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The unofficial, online reports have a different appearance from the official reports and no proficiency levels are assigned. Scores are represented in percentage correct. After student information is verified for accuracy, scores are calculated and proficiency levels assigned. An **official student report** is then uploaded to the DRA Reporting Website and mailed by the Department of Education and Early Development to the districts.

Science Score Possible and Score Earned columns display raw scores. Only valid scores are used for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Scores for the Expanded Levels of Support (ELOS) items are designated as Far Below Proficient, and ELOS scores are not graphically displayed. If the student takes both Standard and ELOS items, only the standard data are displayed.

A	This section identifies the year for the report and all student demographic information.
B	Your Student's Overall Performance indicates the student's score, what score is needed for proficiency according to the approved cut scores, and the student's proficiency levels for the subject area of science.
C	Interpretation of Chart explains how to read components of the chart such as proficiency levels, student skills performance, and expanded levels of support.
D	Your Students Performance by Standard describes the proficiency level reported in B separated into strands, giving the total possible score and the score earned.
E	A graphical representation provides the score needed to obtain levels of proficiency for science (FB – Far Below, BP – Below Proficiency, P – Proficient, and A – Advanced) and indicates where the student's score falls on the proficiency graph.
F	Reverse side of page shows the Proficiency Level Descriptors and cut scores by proficiency level for this grade.



**A ALASKA COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT
ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT
STUDENT REPORT**

NAME : Last Name, First Name Middle Name
BIRTHDATE: 99/99/9999

DISTRICT : Alaska District
SCHOOL : Alaska Elementary School

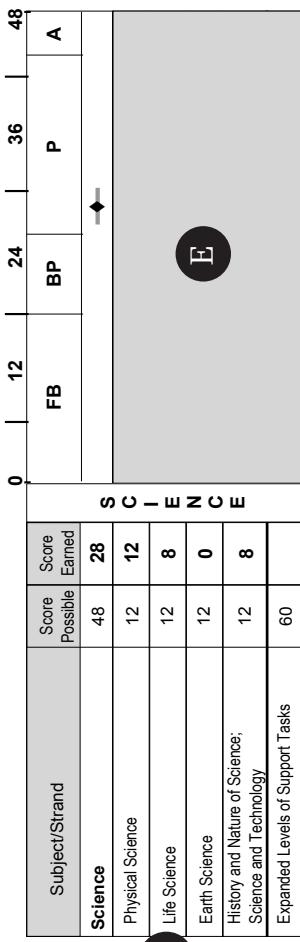
GRADE : 10
STATE ID NUMBER : 9999999999
DISTRICT ID NUMBER : 9999999999

Your Student's Overall Performance

Student's Score	Score Needed for Proficiency	Student's Proficiency Level
Science 28	26 or above	Proficient

*NT-Student Not Tested in this content area.

**Your Student's Performance by Standard
PERFORMANCE LEVELS AND PROBABLE SCORE RANGES**



D

Interpretation of Chart

This report provides a record of the student's test results on the Alternate Assessment in the content area of Science.

Proficiency Levels

The graphic display of scores shows the possible student scores ranging from 0 to 48. Proficiency levels are noted below the score ranges: FB-Far Below Proficient, BP-Below Proficient, P-Proficient, A-Advanced.

Student Skills Performance

The content area of Science is composed of different skills organized into strands. Strands are clusters of learning standards in the content area organized around a central idea or concept. The strand sub-scores are represented numerically in the Score Earned column. Score Possible and Score Earned are raw scores in Science. The graphic displays of student scores are represented by the diamond shapes. The line through the diamond represents the student's score range if the student took the test multiple times; given that all testing results in some variation, sometimes, the student might score a little lower and other times they might score a little higher.

Expanded Levels of Support

Expanded Levels of Support (ELOS) are test items designed to make the alternate assessment more accessible to students who score zero on a minimum number of required test items, and therefore, translate to far below proficient in performance. The ELOS scores are not scaled to the scores of the standard administration of the alternate assessment.



F

ALASKA COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT (CSSA)
ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT
STUDENT REPORT
2009 SPRING

PROFICIENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTORS - GRADE 10

Proficiency Level	Science	Score Range
Advanced	The student demonstrates a highly developed conceptual understanding of the processes and content of science by identifying or demonstrating an understanding of: the basic characteristics of matter, including identifying objects as liquid, solid, or gas; the way in which objects get energy; how the states of water affect weather; purpose of different animal adaptations; the classification of animals as herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores; the characteristics of the solar system; the movement of objects; inherited traits; how the Earth's surface can change as a result of geological activity; tools and their purposes; and the characteristics of the solar system.	44 or above
Proficient	The student demonstrates a basic conceptual understanding of the processes and content of science by identifying or demonstrating an understanding of: the basic characteristics of matter, including identifying objects as liquid, solid, or gas; the way in which objects get energy; how the states of water affect weather; purpose of different animal adaptations; the classification of animals as herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores; the characteristics of the solar system; the movement of objects; inherited traits; how the Earth's surface can change as a result of geological activity; tools and their purposes; and the characteristics of the solar system.	26-43
Below Proficient	The student shows a partial understanding of the processes and content of science by identifying or demonstrating an understanding of: the basic characteristics of matter, including identifying objects as liquid, solid, or gas; the way in which objects get energy; how the states of water affect weather; purpose of different animal adaptations; the classification of animals as herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores; the characteristics of the solar system; the movement of objects; inherited traits; how the Earth's surface can change as a result of geological activity; tools and their purposes; and the characteristics of the solar system.	18-25
Far Below Proficient	The student did not display a minimal understanding of science processes or content as described in the extended grade level expectations.	17 or below